

Jura & Three-Lakes

Head in the pine trees, feet in the lakes

Situation

Jura & Three-Lakes is an official Swiss tourist region recognized by Switzerland Tourism. Located in the north-west of Switzerland, it is a vast territory that spans two linguistic regions (French and German speaking) and several cantons. Jura & Three-Lakes is composed of core regions (canton of Neuchâtel, canton of Jura, Grand Chasseral region - formerly Bernese Jura, and the region of Biel-Seeland), and partner regions (Lake Morat region, southern Lake Neuchâtel, Nord vaudois). We can only respond to requests that concern the core regions within the framework of our cooperation with Switzerland Tourism

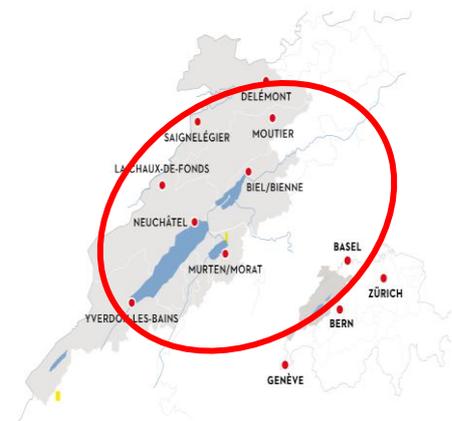
The territory of Jura & Three-Lakes is composed of two coherent geographical areas, namely the mountainous massif of the Swiss Jura chain and the Three-Lakes region located on the plain and including the lakes of Neuchâtel, Bienne and Morat

The main cities are Neuchâtel, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Biel and Delémont, and the total population of Jura & Three-Lakes is about 700'000 inhabitants.

Climate: four distinct seasons, with summers averaging 25° and winters averaging 0°.

Main assets

Truly discreet, and discreetly true. Jura & Trois-Lacs has however solid assets: its preserved natural environment and its authenticity in particular. Composed of varied landscapes, with a rather gentle profile, hiking and biking are practiced with enthusiasm. It is also a land of traditions, of terroir and of





culture. The Neuchâtel mountain region is considered the cradle of watchmaking and there are several regional products that are well anchored in the local heritage.

Hiking : the [Jura Crest Trail](#)

Reputed to be the most gentle of the Swiss long-distance hiking trails, it consists of 16 stages in total, which run along the entire northwestern part of Switzerland, connecting Dielsdorf (a village in the canton of Zürich) to Nyon (on the shores of Lake Geneva) over more than 300 km. Five of these stages are in the territory of Jura & Trois-Lacs, passing in particular by the summit of Chasseral, the Vue des Alpes and the Val-de-Travers.



The crests of the Jura can be considered an alternative to the Alps, with its accessible summits and also offering grandiose panoramas.



The summit of the Chasseral is situated at 1606 m. and is topped by an antenna (telecommunication), which can be seen from far away and which makes it a very appropriate emblem for the region. It is also the official emblem of the [Chasseral Regional Nature Park](#). It is located above Lake Biel, between the two linguistic regions. From there you have an impressive view of the lakes of Biel, Neuchâtel and Murten and the Alps to the south, and Alsace and the Black Forest to the north. You can hike, cycle and in winter you can go cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. It is the highest peak in the region (heartlands).

The lakes: sailing, swimming, resting

At the foot of the Jura mountains lies the Three Lakes region; Lake Biel, connected to Lake Neuchâtel by the Thielle canal, itself connected to Lake Murten by the Broye canal.



Lake Neuchâtel is the largest of the three, and also the largest lake entirely in Switzerland (whose waters are not shared with other countries). It is also known for its palafittic sites, listed by Unesco, which are prehistoric remains.

One of the main activities on the lakes is [sailing](#), either privately or via large boats. The [three-lake cruise](#) is a classic way to discover the region from a different perspective and at a leisurely pace. You can easily connect several places by taking the scheduled trips, and as you can take your bikes on board, it can be a way to shorten an itinerary that would be too tiring for example!

The shores of the lakes are very suitable for swimming, with many [beaches](#) (both developed and wild). The shores are mostly accessible to the public; you can therefore go around the lakes by bike or on foot, following the marked routes.



On the lake of Biemme is the [St. Peters island](#), which is in fact a peninsula. It is a nature reserve, a bird's paradise, and accessible only by boat, on foot or by bicycle (or by swimming). The 18th century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau stayed there for a few weeks and referred to this period of his life as the happiest.

The Franches-Montagnes

Peaceful counterpart of the lakes, here are the [Franches-Montagnes](#). These are hilly landscapes, characterized by pastures, ponds, forests and isolated farms. The relief is gentle and lends itself well to hiking and biking.

Here the [horse](#) is king; herds roam in semi-freedom during the summer months, and there are many horse farms in the area, which offer rides (for beginners, initiates or regulars), as well as carriage rides and farm visits. It is worth noting that the only Swiss horse breed still in existence is the Franches-Montagne. These horses have a rather calm temperament and are considered to be good companions, which makes them ideal for beginners.



Nestled in the heart of the Franches-Montagnes is the [Etang de la Gruère](#), a nature reserve, which is located on a peat bog. The vegetation is typical of peat bogs with mosses, flowers and bushes, and the place has a soothing and mystical atmosphere.

[Watchmaking](#)

The region is the cradle of watchmaking, whose genesis can be summarized as follows: watchmaking was born from a hobby. During the winter, the peasants could not devote themselves to their work and so they tried the meticulous work of clock making. It gradually became the main activity of the famous farmer-watchmakers and today it is the flagship industry of the region.

Visitors can visit the [International Watchmaking Museum in La Chaux-de-Fonds](#), take part in tours of workshops and factories, or learn to assemble their own watch and leave with it.

The neighboring towns of La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle are listed by UNESCO for their [watchmaking urbanism](#), and the [Omega and Swatch museums](#) can be visited in Biel.

Local products

The pleasures of the table are well established here. One finds [absinthe](#), a real tradition in the region, since it was created at the end of the 18th century. The drink was accused of driving people mad and banned in 1908, only to be re-authorized in 2005. During these almost 100 years, the production continued but in a clandestine way. Visitors can visit distilleries as well as the Maison de l'absinthe, which tells the sulphurous history of the drink and offers tastings.

There is also the [Tête de Moine](#), a round cheese originally produced by monks. It is eaten in rosettes, a kind of cheese flower. We can also mention the [Damassine](#), a strong alcohol made of small plums typical of the Jura; the [St-Martin](#), a festival that celebrates the pig in all its culinary forms; the [BFM](#) (Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes) known in particular for its special beer Abbaye de St-Bon-Chien elected best beer in the world by the New York Times in 2009 or the [Camille Bloch chocolate factory](#), producer of the Ragusa, and that we can visit

The region is also a [wine](#) producer (especially on the Neuchâtel and Biel side). The vineyards on the hillsides and along the lake offer magnificent colors in autumn, and it is worthwhile to walk through the wine villages of the region and to stop for a glass of Chasselas or Pinot while enjoying the view.



It should be noted that the region has some very good wines from a classic production but also more and more daring wines, by the choices of production or vinification.

As for the landforms, let's mention the « [métairies](#) » - farmhouses. These are typical farm inns of the Jura mountain range, run by farmers who serve simple and tasty food, often copious, in an authentic and friendly atmosphere. It is not rare to find yourself eating at large tables next to other guests.

Cities and culture

Although small, even on the scale of Switzerland, the [towns](#) of the Jura & Trois-Lacs region have a rich and varied cultural offer, combining alternative and more classical culture, concerts, markets, exhibitions, festivals, etc. Each one has its own identity and its own offer.

[Biel](#) and its old town, which had a bad reputation for a long time but has become welcoming, lively, charming and easy to live with; [Neuchâtel](#), a thousand-year-old city on the lake, where the castle and the collegiate church have stood since time immemorial; [St-Ursanne](#), a small medieval town on the banks of the Doubs, which celebrates the culture of the Middle Ages every two years and attracts thousands of visitors; [La Chaux-de-Fonds](#), a watchmaking town but also the home of the world-renowned architect Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris, known as Le Corbusier. It is good to be curious and take the time to discover the discreet and genuine charm of the cities of Jura & Trois-Lacs.



Recommendations of places to go

The Jura & Trois-Lacs marketing staff will make their suggestions for activities you should not miss:

- [Cross-country skiing in winter](#)
- [Eat a trout on the banks of the Doubs](#)
- [Meet organic producers in the Jura, sleep in their homes and taste their products](#)
- [Taste an "parfait glacé à l'absinthe" - iced absinthe parfait \(dessert\)](#)
- [In spring, admire the fields of daffodils in the pastures](#)



JURA
TROIS-LACS
DREI-SEEN-LAND

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